

STATE OF TEXAS §
 §
COUNTY OF GALVESTON §

DECLARATION OF LOCAL STATE OF DISASTER

WHEREAS, the public health and safety of the residents of Galveston County are under imminent threat from the influx of foreign nationals unlawfully crossing the Texas-Mexico border. The ongoing border crisis has resulted in thousands of undocumented noncitizens entering the State of Texas and Galveston County; and

WHEREAS, Governor Abbott declared a state of disaster on May 31, 2021, which was expanded on June 25, 2021, on the basis of threats to public health arising from the ongoing surge of individuals unlawfully crossing the Texas-Mexico border; and

WHEREAS, this public health threat comes from the flow of illegal drugs in our communities and region, causing addictions, dependencies, and overdoses; the associated violence, resulting from gang and drug activities in our communities and region; the influx of human and sex trafficking in our communities and region; and the elevated risk of exposure to infectious diseases including foreign variants of COVID-19, HIV, tuberculosis, influenza, mumps, measles, rubella, and polio without testing and health regulation of the persons illegally entering our communities and region from nations with higher rates of infection of such diseases; and

WHEREAS, the American Rescue Plan signed in to law on March 11, 2021 by President Joe Biden allocated funds to cities and counties to spend on public health and combat the spread of COVID-19; and

WHEREAS, the Galveston County Commissioners Court passed a resolution on May 17, 2021 relating to the Texas-Mexico border crisis finding that extraordinary measures must be taken to ensure the protection of the health, safety, and welfare of Galveston County residents; and

WHEREAS, in order to protect the public health of Galveston County citizens and defend Galveston County residents from the imminent harms to public health arising from an open Texas-Mexico border, it is necessary to direct county law enforcement and financial resources to assist the State of Texas in securing the Texas-Mexico border; and

WHEREAS, the recent influx of illegal immigrants has overwhelmed federal, state, and local law enforcement capacities which poses a direct threat to the public health safety of Galveston County residents; and

WHEREAS, over the past year U.S. Customs and Border Protection has reported a 1,000% increase in apprehensions of illegal immigrants crossing the U.S.-Mexico border; and

WHEREAS, with the surge of illegal immigration on Texas-Mexico border, the public health risks to Galveston County residents are increasing at an alarming rate; and

WHEREAS, the Texas Government Code Chapter 418 gives the County Judge the power to declare a local disaster within the county “if the threat of disaster is imminent”; and

WHEREAS, such controls, once implemented have the potential of protecting the lives, property, and public health of Galveston County residents;

BE IT THEREFORE DECLARED BY THE COUNTY JUDGE OF GALVESTON COUNTY:

1. A local state of disaster is hereby declared for Galveston County, Texas pursuant to Section 418.108(a) of the Texas Government Code.
2. This state of disaster will continue until rescinded in accordance with the above cited statute, but in no instance will this declaration continue for more than seven days without being authorized by the County Commissioners Court.
3. This declaration of local state of disaster shall be given prompt and general publicity and shall be filed promptly with the County Clerk.
4. Pursuant to Section 418.108(d) of the Texas Government Code, this declaration of a local state of disaster activates the Galveston County emergency management plan.
5. Pursuant to the County Judge’s emergency powers authorized under Chapter 418 of the Government Code in times of a declared disaster, it is hereby ORDERED:
 - a. Pursuant to Section 362.002(a) of the Texas Local Government Code, Galveston County’s law enforcement officials are authorized to provide assistance in concert with the State of Texas or other Texas counties on or near the border which are also experiencing a declared state of disaster and which have requested assistance to uphold the sovereignty and territorial integrity of this State and mitigate public health effects in this county.
 - b. This declaration hereby establishes the “Galveston County Border Security Response Team” and appoints Galveston County Sheriff Henry

Trochesset, Constable Rick Sharp, Constable Jimmy Fullen, and Constable Justin West as Directors of the Team. Directors shall coordinate the deployment of resources to respond to the state of disaster with the State of Texas and other corresponding counties. Any municipal law enforcement agency in the County which wishes to participate in the border disaster response should contact a Director for coordination.

- c. This declaration hereby authorizes the Galveston County Border Security Response Team to propose the use of American Rescue Plan funds allocated to the Galveston County to carry out border security operations in order to protect the public health of Galveston County residents. Proposals shall be submitted by the Team to the County Judge for final approval.
- d. This declaration hereby authorizes the transfer of up to 10% (\$6,600,000) of American Rescue Plan funds allocated to Galveston County, Texas to assist with the construction of a permanent border wall along the Texas-Mexico border to protect the public health of Galveston County residents, subject to the proposal of the Team and final approval of the Judge as described above.
- e. This declaration shall take effect immediately.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I affix my signature this 29 day of June, 2021.


County Judge

Filed with the Clerk of County on, _____, 2021.